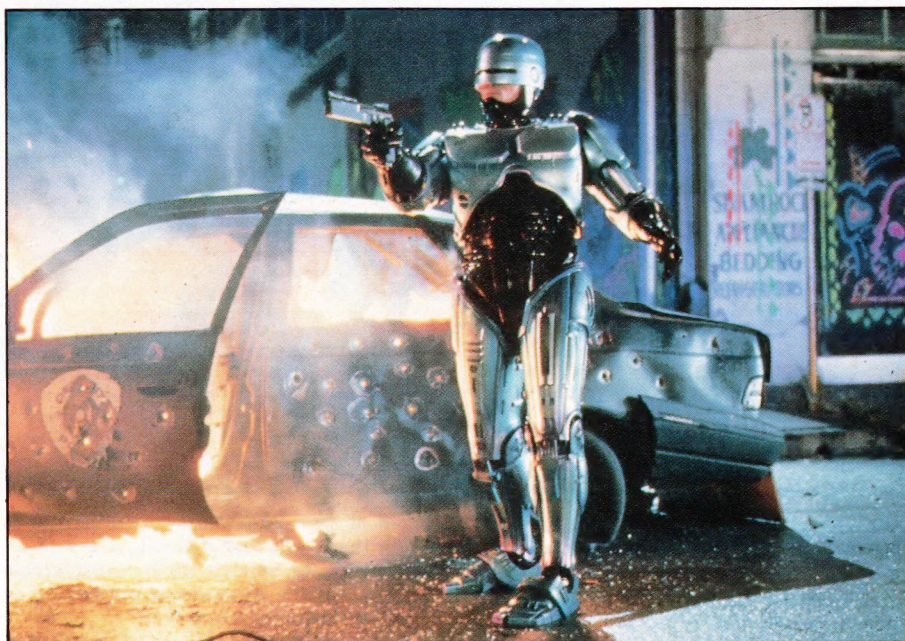


ROBOCOP 2

NEW
MOVIES



TOM HUTCHINSON reports on the continuing saga of the cyborg cop

● THAT *was* the summer of discontent that was, the one we've just gone through. Discontent, that is, from various social commentators in America about the cinema of gore and violence heaped upon moviegoers from film-makers on a box-office high.

RoboCop 2 comes to us a bit late from that midsummer mayhem which caused one American TV show – ever ready to savage a media-rival – to say: "There is an escalating level of sadism on the screen. It's been the bloodiest, most violent summer that audiences have ever been exposed to."

RoboCop 2 came in for a lot of the flak and the number of its falling bodies thudded

home with some jarring statistics from those who had bothered to count them. In vain did its director, Irvin Kershner, try to explain that his film was really about "what could happen if America continued to lose its moral compass."

Cynics said that he had helped America to lose it. The compass-pointer for most people had swung in the direction of violence for profit. *RoboCop 2* was alleged to be among the most explicitly nasty, and at a cost of 30 million dollars it's more than double the cost of the original movie three years ago.

Most of the original components still stand armour-plated, like RoboCop himself, against change, with a Detroit of the future still up for grabs by Omni Consumer Products – "a free market is any market we can corner" – which is underpaying the private police-force and overloading the public corruption.

Against the rising tide of filth and addiction to a new, Paradise-promising drug called Nuke, stands RoboCop, formerly Alex Murphy, now a cyborg, who can still twirl a fancy six-shooter at the villains.

Half-man; half-machine he's certainly more moral than a lot of the humans around, for along comes as nasty a Nuke-fuelled gang as ever we have seen, headed by a Messiah-figure, Cain, and a vicious youngster Hob. (Note for scholars: Cain is the one who killed his brother, while Hob is Old English for devil – you get an education here, you must admit).

These nasties ensure that RoboCop is beaten up and taken apart, while the wounded Cain himself becomes RoboCop 2, a monster-robot made by OCP and a sinister woman-scientist who has test-tubes for veins

Producer
JON DAVISON
Director
IRVIN KERSHNER
Screenplay
FRANK MILLER/WALON GREEN
Photography
MARK IRWIN
Music
LEONARD ROSENMAN
116 Minutes – Certificate 18
(RANK)

RoboCop PETER WELLER
Anne Lewis NANCY ALLEN
Old Man DANIEL O'HERLIHY
Juliette Faxx BELINDA BAUER
Cain TOM NOONAN
Hob GABRIEL DAMON
Angie GALYN GORG

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SCRIPT 8 PRODUCTION 8 ENTERTAINMENT VALUE 9

and a freezer for a heart – metaphorically, that is.

The ultimate shootout between RoboCop 1 and 2 finishes off all the lowly bad guys while still ensuring that the top baddies are still intact and in charge.

So RoboCop 1 has gone to all that trouble – along with us – for very little. The villains, like periodic outcries against sex and violence, are always with us.

VERDICT

● The film has so many strikes against it, gratuitous torture via underuse of women-actresses to an eardrum-piercing soundtrack, that you may wonder why I've given it nine marks for entertainment.

Well it *does* entertain, in however warped a fashion. It diverts the mind, however grossly. You don't look away, because you might miss something freshly appalling.

Cynical? That's in line with the concept of the movie.

Peter Weller manages some kind of performance as RoboCop, but the delicious Nancy Allen is barely in it despite her being billed as a co-star. The best items are the satirical TV commercials. Otherwise, it's all mindless violence, put together with a good deal of thought.

